

AperTO - Archivio Istituzionale Open Access dell'Università di Torino

## Urban food planning in Italian cities: a comparative analysis of the cases of Milan and Turin

### This is the author's manuscript

*Original Citation:*

*Availability:*

This version is available <http://hdl.handle.net/2318/1660933> since 2018-02-27T19:36:59Z

*Published version:*

DOI:10.1080/21683565.2017.1340918

*Terms of use:*

Open Access

Anyone can freely access the full text of works made available as "Open Access". Works made available under a Creative Commons license can be used according to the terms and conditions of said license. Use of all other works requires consent of the right holder (author or publisher) if not exempted from copyright protection by the applicable law.

(Article begins on next page)

# Urban food planning in Italian cities: a comparative analysis of the cases of Milan and Turin

Andrea Calori\*, Egidio Dansero\*\*, Giacomo Pettenati\*\*, Alessia Toldo\*\*\*

\* *ESTà - Economia e Sostenibilità, Milan*

\*\* *Department of Cultures, politics and society, University of Turin*

\*\*\* *Interuniversity Department of Interuniversity Department of Regional and Urban Studies and Planning, Politecnico and University of Turin*

## 1. Introduction

Awareness of the urban nature of food related issues that were once prominently confined to the rural sector (Pothukuchi and Kaufmann, 1999) has gradually surfaced over the last 15 years.

Cities have been progressively identified as the main drivers of the global food system, even if particularly exposed to the negative externalities of the so-called *new food equation*, made of climate change, price variability, global food insecurity and food related conflicts (Morgan and Sonnino, 2010).

Only recently cities have been acknowledged as specific scales of the food system, as well as scales of action of the so-called *Urban Food Planning* (Pothukuchi and Kaufmann, 2000).

Consistently with these premises, many urban areas are progressively obtaining competences and responsibilities to develop policies focused on planning and managing sustainable urban food systems, and on guaranteeing high quality, healthy and accessible food to city dwellers and city users (Moragues Faus and Morgan, 2015).

Thus, cities are now acknowledged as new players of food policies, especially through the planning of local food systems at the urban/metropolitan scale (Morgan, 2009 and 2013), and through the development and implementation of *Urban Food Strategies* (UFS) or *Urban Food Policies* (UFP), which can be defined as “a process consisting of how a city envisions change in its food system, and how it strives towards this change” (Moragues et al., 2013).

Of course, urban policies have always included sectoral food policies concerning, for example, food markets, school canteens, urban vegetable gardens and so on. The innovation of Urban Food Policies, though, consists in an integrated approach to food, understood in its multidimensional and systematic nature (Morgan 2015). According to this approach, food is not seen only as a provider of nutrients, an economic asset or as a cultural trait, but as a real complex territorial factor that links environment, society, culture and economy.

This contribution aims at enriching the still poor comparative debate about UFP (Sonnino, 2009; Moragues Faus and Morgan, 2015), discussing case of two main Italian cities, Turin and Milan, which have been committed to a process of UFP development in recent years.

This paper is structured with the next section focusing on how Urban Food Policies and Urban Food Strategies can be considered new urban political arenas. The second part of the paper presents the two case studies of Turin and Milan, the two biggest cities of Northern Italy and among the first to develop a framework for the adoption of such policy tools in Italy. The conclusion focuses on how the simultaneous development of such processes in the two urban areas could lead to rethink the relationship between these two almost contiguous metropolitan areas that are linked by rural spaces.

Most of the information used for the case-studies come from the direct participation of the authors tho the processes of development of UFPs in the two cities, with the multiple roles of action-researchers, consultants and actors of the food systems (both as ordinary citizens and as members of the university system).

## 2. Urban Food Policies: new public arenas for new policies<sup>1</sup>

In cities where they are part of the local agenda, the processes of Urban Food Planning (Morgan, 2009) usually generate implementable strategies and actions, assuming the name of Urban Food Strategies (UFSs), or Urban Food Policies (UFPs).

This section explores the issue of UFPs, describing them as a new public arena where local and supra-local actors develop and implement a new type of policy concerning food, experimenting new models and scales of governance of the food system (Mount, 2012).

UFPs set food as a core subject in the public political agenda, capitalising existing experiences and practices, creating networks among different groups of stakeholders (private, public, associations and non-profit organisations, social community), with the aim of having sustainable, resilient and fair food systems and creating new spaces of deliberation, involving different actors (Moragues Faus et al, 2013). In most cases these processes produce and are promoted by manifestos, vision documents, strategic plans, suggesting visions, actions and (in the most virtuous cases) monitoring systems.

Even if each city defines, adopts and implements UFPs starting from locally-based needs, frameworks and objectives, the several existing examples of these tools (Calori and Magarini, 2015) show how we can identify some shared steps in the development and implementation of UFPs.

The first is a starting phase, in some cases triggered by the commitment of some policy makers or public officers, in other cases by the pressure of local food movements, that reclaims a more just and sustainable food system. Consequently, this phase can be strongly institutionalized, due to the leading role of local authorities, or more bottom-up, when it is

---

<sup>1</sup> Most of the information used in this paragraph comes from the desk analysis of 24 UFSs in the UK (Bath & North East Somerset, Belfast, Bradford, Brighton and Hove, Bristol, Durham, Edinburgh, Islington, Herefordshire, London, Sheffield), Canada (Calgary, Edmonton, Oakland, Toronto, Vancouver), USA (Los Angeles, New York, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Seattle), Sweden (Malmö), and Italy (Pisa).

[2] *Torino Strategica* is an association "that promotes strategic planning methods, monitors its actions, sets up specific workshops, informs the public about development opportunities created by the Strategic Plan and encourages the public's participation".

([www.torinostrategica.it](http://www.torinostrategica.it))

pushed by non-institutional actors of the local food system, who are collectively acknowledged as leaders of the process.

Once the process has started, the first step of development of UFPs is usually the analysis of the food system, carried out by public authorities, universities, or other research and consultancy bodies, in order to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the system, the actors' networks and the preferable governance models of the food system. Some interesting examples of these analysis comes from UK and Northern American cities, such as, for example, Bristol (Carey, 2011) and Vancouver (Hild, 2009).

In many cases, then, the goals and the priorities of the future food policy are identified through a participatory process, involving actors and stakeholders of the food system, with different degrees of participation, from a selected group of stakeholders to potentially every citizen. The main output of this process is usually a vision statement (e.g., food charter, agenda, manifesto, etc.) that explicitly establishes the shared goals of future food policies shared by actors participating in the process. This preliminary statement is usually followed by the adoption of a strategic document (e.g., a food plan), containing the general and specific goals of the UFPs, the actions required to achieve them, and the characteristics of a monitoring system.

The most advanced step of the process of development and adoption of UFPs is then the institution of a legally and politically legitimised management structure in charge to coordinate the implementation of its strategies and actions, and to monitor its achievements. This can be a specifically established new body - for example a Food Council or a Food Commission - or an already existing, public or private, actor of the urban food system. These new actors of the food system combine the role of public and private sector in several ways. However, public institutions are usually required to pilot and harmonise interactions among the actors of the system. Generally speaking, the public member does not contribute its competences in planning specialised projects but rather in incentivising and stimulating the various action forms that emerge from social interaction, in framing the complexities and the differences, and in outlining the background political options on which participation is built. In this respect, the building processes of strategies at times create new spaces with different degrees of formality, affiliation with the public player, organisation and operative rules.

Even if most of the already adopted UFPs follow this flow, these steps would not necessarily be implemented in every case. A strong diversity among cases concerns for example the degree of participation of actors of the food system, the systems of governance and the actions for the implementation of the strategies, as well as the balance between the involvement of public authorities (at a municipal or metropolitan scale) and private actors, such as food businesses or food movements.

Most UFPs share a holistic approach to the urban food system and an integrated vision in a horizontal perspective (considering as a whole all the possible focuses of food policies), in a vertical perspective (considering the need of a multi-scalar governance of the food system), and in circular perspective (considering the different phases of the food chain, from farm to fork and to waste).

Usually, the systemic general objective of UFPs—to achieve a more sustainable, just and efficient urban food system—is divided into many more specific sub-goals. The most common ones concern food governance (connection among subjects, policies and tools), environmental sustainability (air, water, soil, transportation, waste, energy, city-countryside relations, urban and peri-urban agriculture), economic development and employment

(agriculture, agro-industry, business, tourism and promotion of the territory), public health, food education and quality of life (nutrition-related diseases, school programmes, continuous training for adults), socio-spatial justice (fighting in food deserts), cultural approach to food, and so on.

Moving beyond this general framework, the actual process of defining and implementing UFPs is deeply place-based and related to the features of both local urban governance and the food system. Indeed, the definition of policy issues—environment, production, nutrition, welfare, etc.—depends on the types and configuration of actors engaged in food issues, and not only on the initial setting that is proposed by the promoters of the policy. In other words, the possibility of effectively influencing the urban food system depends on its capability to mobilise actors who contribute contents at an urban level, and to enhance their perception of both the importance of food needs and of their own interests. Finally, it also depends on the capability to define new public spaces for dialogue in order to transform these perceptions, interests and needs into common choices that can be based on the local context. It is crucial, then, to consider how the international discourse on UFPs can be territorialized into contexts—in this case, Northern Italy—where mutual relationships between food, society, economy, culture and environment differ considerably in part from those of countries where the “food planning discourse” firstly developed and is now firmly rooted, such as North America and the UK.

### **3. Urban Food Policies in Italy: the cases of Turin and Milan**

#### *3.1 Urban Food Policies in Italy*

Although occurring a few years after other countries, the issue of food planning is increasingly gaining space in many Italian cities. The first case was Pisa, where a provincial Food Plan (*Piano del Cibo della Provincia di Pisa*) was launched in 2010 (Di Iacovo et al., 2013). Since then, some Italian cities have initiated different processes designed to develop and implement UFPs and build awareness of the need to think, plan and deal with food at the urban scale. These initiatives have progressively spread throughout Italy (e.g. a latest interesting case is the Livorno Food Strategy).

Moreover, in the last years, at least two important factors have contributed to build momentum for what concerns research and practice about food and food policies in Italian cities and surrounding areas.

The first is the process of institutional reordering, which in the main urban areas has created the institution of the *città metropolitana*, a new institutional body, strengthening the metropolitan scale for some spatial planning issues. The institutional change, though, did not include a redefinition of the boundaries of the former *provincia*, which rarely corresponded to the limits of the functional metropolitan area. Notwithstanding the separation between the new institutional scale and the actual boundaries of the functional metropolitan area, this institutional turn could be an important challenge in terms of considering and managing an urban-centred regional system, such as the urban food system, within a new institutional framework, with new competences and a new role for cities (for a detailed analysis of the role of this new scale of local government, see Calafati, 2014).

The second factor is the spatial and temporal proximity of EXPO 2015 (Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life), which was held in Milan between May and October 2015. Local institutions (at the municipal, provincial and regional scale) are trying to attract part of the potential benefits of Expo 2015 into their boundaries, both for what concerns flows of tourists and projects, and policies regarding food, the main topic of the international event,. To date, the culminating point of this process could be identified in the Milan Food Policy Pact (MUFPP) that was signed by 138 cities of the world, 18 of which are Italian. For some of these cities, the MUFPP is the very first step of the implementation process of UFPs, the Pact, though it is also a political, methodological and legal framework, which contains general political commitments as well as operational guidelines concerning the sense and possibilities of UFPs. The added value is given by the global network of the cities that signed the Pact, exchanging information about practices, building a critical mass and working together to improve the global food system by enhancing several local urban food systems.

### 3.2 *The methodology of analysis*

The second part of this section of the paper describes and analyses with a comparative approach two of the most interesting processes of UFP development currently implemented in Italy, precisely in Turin and Milan.

Though international literature is rich in case analyses about single UFPs, mostly in the US and in the UK (e.g., Blay-Palmer, 2009; Carey, 2013; Moragues-Faus and Morgan, 2105), comparative analyses are still quite rare and consequently a shared and tested interpretative framework for the assessment of UFPs is still lacking. Moragues et al. (2013) presented a general overview of the main features of several European Urban and Regional Food Policies within the framework of the Foodlinks European project, comparing UFPs mostly for what concerns their goals and implementation. Moragues-Faus and Morgan (2015) deeply analysed two cases (Bristol and Malmö), using the perspective of urban political ecology in order to critically explore the processes undertaken by the two cities to fashion more sustainable urban food systems.

The methodological framework of this analysis is based on the criteria proposed by Sonnino and Spayde (2014), which have been adapted to the current preliminary phase of UFPs development in Turin and Milan, focusing more on processes than on the existing policies and actions. The two authors provide policy makers with guidelines to analyse and assess UFPs, underscoring their most important elements, namely:

(a) *clarity of the overall vision* proposed by the policies under construction. Which “food system” are these processes aiming at? Which are the attributes of “food” defined as desirable by the actors of the process?

(b) adoption of a *comprehensive policy approach*. Is food considered during its whole chain, from farm to fork and even after, up to the waste bin?

(c) an explicitly and clearly *stated need for change*. Is this need explicitly underscored by the goals of the food strategy?

(d) degree of *involvement of stakeholders*. What is the extent of participation in the process? How many and which stakeholders are involved in sharing the vision of the future urban food system?

(e) the presence of *mechanisms to evaluate and monitor progress*. Is there a well-defined system to evaluate the results of the food policy, the re-defined goals and the implementation actions, if the need for reformulation should arise?

(f) the capacity to harness *cultural change in the system*. Does the food policy seem to be able to substantially change the way food is produced, distributed, chosen and consumed within the local food system?

This scheme of interpretation has been used as guideline for the description and the analysis of the two case studies.

### **3.3 Turin: from corporate town to city of food?**

Situated in the north-western area of the country, Turin is the fourth biggest Italian city in terms of population, counting 900,000 inhabitants, with numbers rising to almost 1.5 million in the densely urbanized metropolitan area and 2.3 million, if we consider the whole *città metropolitana*. In the last decades, the city has undergone an impressive physical and symbolic post-industrial transformation. Many industrial plants have closed down, leaving extensive empty brownfields in the middle of the city, areas that have been progressively filled by brand new portions of urban space (Armano et al, 2016). This change was associated with a remarkable re-invention process of the city's image, which experienced its turning point in the 2006 Winter Olympic Games (Dansero and Puttilli 2009).

The post-fordist Turin is being characterized by a multiple identity, where beside surviving industrial activities, a new profile of the city progressively emerged, based on assets like cultural tourism (boosted by the 2006 Winter Olympic Games ) and where gastronomy and food-related events play a very important role.

Turin belongs to a territorial system where food is a mature economic, social and cultural asset, which contributes to regional development that is increasingly based on high quality food production (wine, chocolate, nuts, cheese, etc.) or food and wine tourism, which are gradually replacing heavy industries in the economic system and in the symbolic representations (Vanolo, 2015) of an area which goes beyond the limits of the Turin metropolitan area, including high-quality rural regions, such as Langhe.

The acknowledgment of this asset, encouraged by some strong and very active stakeholders (e.g., Slow Food, Eataly), led to the organisation of several initiatives and events designed to promote and safeguard typical food products (e.g., Salone del Gusto, Terra Madre, Cioccolato, etc), which have made Turin one of the most renowned national “capitals of food” (Torino Strategica, 2013).

Food plays an important role also in the social and political activism of many citizens of Turin, as witnessed by the many practices and projects aimed at imagining, planning and practicing a new model for the food system, based on new relations between people, urban space, natural environment and food (Bottiglieri et al. 2016).

Three different processes - initiated almost concurrently during the past three years - constitute the main elements of the road toward the definition and implementation of a food policy for Turin. None of them, though, so far led to any official operational document or to the adoption of a real UFP.

The first is the working table *Torino Capitale del Cibo* (Torino Food Capital) launched in 2014 by the public-led association *Torino Strategica* within the third Strategic Plan *Torino Metropoli 2025*, which defines the vision and plans for the future of Turin's metropolitan area, and currently at a stop, due to the changes in the local government of Turin. The main aim of this table was to put food in the debate about the strategic planning of the metropolitan area, especially by the creation of a Food Commission, deemed as the combination of Food Policy Council and business hub, in view of developing and managing a metropolitan food system designed to ensure better quality and be more sustainable, fair, resilient and competitive.

The second is *Nutrire Torino Metropolitana* (Feeding Metropolitan Turin): a participatory process managed by the *Città Metropolitana* (the former Province of Turin) and the University of Turin, that in 2015 involved a wide selection of actors of the food system (more than 200) in the participatory definition of a local food agenda, as a first step towards launching a food strategy for this area. The output of the project was a draft of this Agenda that, though, is not still being used as a basis for the development of policies.

The third is the European project *Food Smart Cities for Development* (FSCD) funded by the Development Education and Awareness Raising (DEAR) Office of the European Commission, which had as one of its expected outputs the creation of a Food Policy Council. The project formally ended in December 2016, but the Council has not been established yet.

These three processes feature different scales of action (from the provincial to the municipal scale), different leading actors and different specific aims. However, they share a general methodology and the general objective to involve a wide selection of actors and stakeholders of the food system in the process of definition of the priorities of a possible UFP and the institution of a governance structure for the food system.

This analysis considers the three described processes as three occasionally overlapping steps (they started at different times) of a single bigger process that involves a network of local actors, aiming at building a framework within which to develop urban food policies addressed at increasing the social, economic and environmental sustainability of Turin's local food system.

Even if the three processes did not have yet any strategic "food plan" as their output, they produced three important outputs, which represent the main sources of this analysis, along with the personal experience of the authors, who have been part of all the three processes, as action-researchers

The first is the section of the third strategic plan of the Turin metropolitan area - *Torino Metropoli 2025* (Torino Strategica, 2015) - aiming at setting the scenario for making of Turin a "Food City", stating the vision and the main strategic actions the food policy should have.

The main output of the participatory process of *Nutrire Torino Metropolitana* (NTM), involving more than 200 actors of the food system, was a final report underscoring the priority issues that should be part of the food agenda (Dansero et al., 2016; Di Bella, 2016). It has not yet been officially adopted as a real agenda, though.

The main role of the project FSCD - that should have led to the institution of a Food Policy Council - toward a Turin food policy was a wide collection of practices and projects that already exist in the urban area and that aim at the enhancement of environmental and social performance of the food system (collected in the book edited by Bottiglieri et al, 2016).



Following the general methodological framework of analysis proposed by Sonnino and Spayde (2014) and summarized above, the first factor that must be highlighted is that the *vision* proposed by the three processes can be summarized as one of a food system characterised by a diffused accessibility of high-quality of food (Torino Strategica, 2015). This accessibility emerges from different perspectives: economic, cultural and physical, even if the last one is not a really urgent issue in Turin's food system where more than 40 food markets are daily held (Bottiglieri et al, 2016). The processes considers food as a complex concept characterised by strong multidimensionality. This is shown, for example, by the variety of issues collected in the draft agenda presented by NTM's final report: education; information; logistics; public procurement; simplification and reduction of bureaucracy; support to quality; spatial planning; *governance*, education, information, governance, logistics, spatial planning, public procurement and so on (Dansero et al, 2016).

The chosen *policy approach*, of the three processes is adequately comprehensive. The various phases and dimensions of the food system has been sufficiently represented by actors participating in the process. However, some of them - e.g. agricultural production - are rarely indicated as a primary objective of the food policy, despite the variety and the abundance of urban and peri-urban agricultural practices existing in Turin.

The vision of the processes clearly states the *need to change* the food system by enhancing sustainability and justice. This considering the fact, the criticalities of the Turin food system appear less urgent than in other cities where UFPs have already been implemented, for example, for what concerns access to fresh food and food-related health diseases. Consequently, the desired change is related to make the most of and link up existing practices in order to improve the food system's sustainability (Bottiglieri et al., 2016).

As already mentioned, the three processes *involved many stakeholders* in a participatory path that alternated moments of wide participation (e.g., round tables organised by the NTM initiative), with smaller meetings involving a selection of stakeholders. The analysis of the involved actors shows that the process successfully engaged stakeholders representing the whole food chain and voiced the opinions of both the most powerful (e.g., city authorities and big retail) and weaker actors of the system (e.g., food movements and independent consumers). The wide and heterogeneous participation of the actors (more than 250, considering NTM and the working tables of *Torino Capitale del Cibo*) witnesses the food system's vitality and dynamism.

Despite the current lack of a food plan for Turin, the three processes share a project designed to constantly evaluate and *monitor the food system* with participatory methodologies. The project is the *Atlante del Cibo*, a platform developed by a multidisciplinary network of researchers from the main local universities (University of Turin, Polytechnic of Turin, University of Gastronomic Science) (Dansero et al, 2015).

For what concerns the food policy's capacity to *harness cultural change*, it is clear that the processes have based their action on the multiplicity of actors and practices that are already working locally to change the food system. Most of the actors of local food movements from different fields (solidarity purchasing groups, urban agriculture, fair trade, waste prevention, and so on) participated in the processes and contributed to influence the draft of the food agenda.

The most relevant conclusion emerging by the analysis of the three processes going on in Turin is the need to merge them in a unique process of development of a real and effective Turin Food Policy, considering that, even if within different frameworks they are participated

by the same actors. The political and institutional scenario is now particularly favourable, considering that the *Città di Torino* (municipality) and the *Città metropolitana*, after decades of institutional separation, finally share the same political leader, since the mayor of Turin is now also the president of the newly established institution.

### 3.4 Milan: before and beyond the Expo effect <sup>2</sup>

Milan has a population of 1,350,000, with about 3,200,000 people living within the borders of the *città metropolitana* and more than 4.5 million people, if we consider the huge and almost continuous conurbation that extends from Milan northwards.

While the major part of the northern side of the Milanese area is mainly urbanised, the context of the city of Milan is a complex system in which very dense settlements are surrounded by a wide agricultural plain where a very simplified rural landscape coexists with areas that have naturalistic value. Milan is located in the heart of the Parco Agricolo Sud Milano (South Milan Agricultural Park) that includes 88 municipalities. It is the first and largest agricultural park in Europe (Ferraresi, 1993; Beltrame, 2000).

Over the past ten years, hundreds of local projects and initiatives have been developed in this context by social movements and networks to address local food production and consumption with a sustainable perspective. Many of these projects were substantially supported by the *Cariplo Foundation* (a bank-related foundation), which funded numerous research and network projects in the entire Lombardy region in order to promote the upscaling of grassroots experiences and to raise awareness among public institutions and citizens.

Besides, many changes and innovation processes have developed around food due to the combination of new trends affecting the urban population (migration, aging, new lifestyles, one member families, etc.) and the presence, in the city of Milan, of many economic actors of the food chain who are locally involved, as well as primary actors of the agro-industrial sector (Calori, 2009; Calori, Magarini, 2014).

Then, in recent years, the perspective of Expo 2015 has boosted the interest for food in Milan, and a wide range of events, debates and projects have been organised in the city.

In this context, the local municipal government decided to promote a process to define and implement an UFP for the city, also considering the wider context of the metropolitan area that plays an important role in food issues at a city-region level.

The official process started in spring 2014 but policy effects concerning sustainable food issues had been promoted for years through public discussions and linked with institutional processes. The following description is a brief summary of two of the main processes that, in the past decade, connected the practices of local quality production and consumption with a wider culture of sustainability and with a network approach at the city level.

- 2002 witnessed the foundation of the first network of *Gruppi di Acquisto Solidale* (GAS – solidarity purchasing groups), namely groups of families (from 15 to 100 families for each purchasing group) organised outside the mainstream market to buy food directly from producers, defining features and price of the products and reporting

---

<sup>2</sup> The author of the chapter on Milan is Andrea Calori, the scientific responsible of the methodology of the Food Policy of Milan.

on quality, sustainability and ethical production criteria. As an outcome of the widespread formation of these groups, the so-called District of Rural and Social Economy (DESR) was established in 2008 as coalitions of GASs, farms and other actors that conduct business according to the principles of fair trade and solidarity economy (ethical banks, microcredit actors, fair trade initiatives, etc.) were formed (Corrado 2013). The DES developed a number of public discussions as well as projects and actions organised with the contribution and the participation of various municipalities and institutions of the metropolitan area as part of different local policies (Tavolo per la Rete italiana di economia solidale 2010).

- In 2011-2013, four *Agricultural Districts* were created in the metropolitan area of Milan as a result of the dialogue between active farmers and local authorities. These Districts are formalised under a national law, which supports the aggregation of enterprises that cooperate towards overall improvement by upgrading and qualifying food production. The process of establishing the four Districts was supported in different ways by the Region and by the Municipality of Milan as part of different policies (rural, environmental, territorial, etc.) and was based on a number of public meetings as well as EU projects (Borasio, Prusicki, 2014).

For the evolution of Milan's food policy, it is important to say that, for many years, the Municipality has participated in several food-related projects and policies and has also been a key actor in the development of the Agricultural District of Milan. But, besides this growing focus on local agriculture, neither the City government nor any other institution provided actual support to define a comprehensive strategy for food issues. Despite this lack of institutional guiding roles, the cultural basis for an integrated approach to food policies at the city level was created by a number of initiatives that brought together, during public discussions, people and representatives from different social and research contexts that were, in some way, interconnected with the dynamics of the DES and of the agricultural districts (Corrado 2013, Calori, Magarini 2014).

About the case of Milan it can be said that this long incubation process in which there is a slow but constant diffusion of cultural approaches that are shared by a growing number of people and actors, is not the result of a political decision or of a specific institutional action, because it is mainly related to a public space that was created and fed by a variety of social actors. If we cannot actually say that this long process was only driven by social actors, it is true that it developed mainly as a social space fed by social and environmental associations, informal groups, farmers and some of their associations, active researchers as well as experts, public officers and some political representatives. Even if during a whole decade there were also institutional supports and projects, it was mainly a socially driven and wide-ranging process, which can, itself, be seen as a public space in which many people developed awareness, ideas, relations, economic activities and contents for future policies (Calori 2015).

The institutional process of the city of Milan's food policy initially began without a direct connection to this variety of public debates, processes and projects. The Mayor of Milan, Giuliano Pisapia, decided to initiate an organised process, probably having perceived the need to do something for the city that would be associated with the positive environment and international dynamics created in the city by Expo. The process started with a medium to long-term partnership between the municipality and Fondazione Cariplo, the most important bank-related foundation in Italy, with head office in Milan.

Initially there was no specific political input about what the food policy should focus on, a part of a first general input to fight food waste, and the task of conveying an overall *vision* was mainly assigned to the technical-scientific support group of EStà – *Economia e Sostenibilità*, a non-profit independent research and training team that supported the whole process. The mandate that was given to define the cultural approach and methodology was very broad, and the openness of this mandate allowed to adopt a very comprehensive approach for the food policy.

This was defined as a way of making the city more sustainable, starting from food related issues (Calori, Magarini 2015). Addressing food as a key to the sustainability of the city was intended to read and govern the relationships that link Milan to cities and territories in the global economy, starting from the aspects of physical proximity and the organisation of social and economic relations in the Milan and Lombardy area.

From this perspective, the process considered many dimensions of food as part of the food chain (production, processing, distribution, consumption, waste and disposal). Moreover, a broad analysis was conducted on the urban and territorial context in which Milan's food system is articulated. This analysis was designed to understand the dynamics and policies that are either directly or indirectly linked to the food chain (e.g., environmental and territorial players of production, cultures and ways of life, health, economy, research, infrastructure, etc.) and the type of existing policies that are already cooperating towards a potentially comprehensive strategy for a more sustainable city even if, by now, they have become sectoral policies (Milan Food Policy 2015).

Since there was no initial input from the Municipality about specific priorities, the process started without an explicit and publicly declared *need for change*. Despite the huge diffusion of social actions concerning food issues, a number of innovative and new economic initiatives, and many public initiatives and discussions on food, in recent years there has been no political debate about the need for some kind of explicit change under a defined and widely shared vision.

The actors of the city were involved (*involvement of stakeholders*) during the early phase of analysis with initial mapping of the strategic stakeholders in order to engage them soon as a way of receiving and sharing information and to build a multidimensional analysis and interpretation of the current situation. In this phase, about 50 researchers and scholars were asked to share their existing reports and studies on the different parts of the food system and the Milanese context. At the same time, another 50 representatives of local associations, social networks and foundations were involved in similar debates focused on integrating the existing scientific knowledge with the widespread "social knowledge" (Milan Food Policy 2015).

A second phase witnesses progressive differentiation of involvement mechanisms. A consultation phase was addressed to associations, non-profit organisations, low-profit corporations and start-ups and, at the same time, several meetings were organised in the Borough Councils with interested citizens living in the nine boroughs that comprise Milan. Business enterprises were then involved with a more informative purpose, and some of all these players were invited to attend a City Council Meeting of about 150 people.

To date there is no defined *monitoring system* to evaluate the evolution and results of the food policy, though a unanimously voted Resolution of the Board of the City of Milan clearly indicates two mechanisms for the continuation of the process that are linked to the need and the advisability of having a public transparent monitoring method for the process (Comune di

Milano 2015). In fact, the resolution indicates the benefit of connecting the priorities that were defined by the consultation, and later perfected and validated by the City Board and by the City Council, with a set of measurable targets and indicators. Besides, it was decided by vote to promote a process designed to establish a metropolitan food council. This council should have different roles, one of which is to have a public arena to discuss and evaluate activities associated with the food policy, also by using measurable targets and indicators (Calori A. 2015; Agnelli G., Calori A., Federici F., Magarini A, 2016).

At present it is quite difficult to evaluate the capability of the formal process of the city of Milan's food policy to achieve a *cultural change* in its context both because the process is quite recent and because it is developing in a very articulated socio-economic context in which the culture of sustainable food has been growing in different ways. The very idea of promoting a process and of integrating it into a comprehensive picture of most food-related issues has encouraged expectations in many contexts and actors that, previously, were not explicitly involved in such discussions. It must also be said that several members of the City Board have started speaking about some of their innovative projects, as well as some of their ordinary activities, as "part of the Milan Food Policy", which can be considered a way of sharing a cultural framework to endow the sectoral institutional action with wider meaning.

It's important to highlight that, even if, the change of the City government in June 2016 implied a significant slowing down of the general direction of the process, a lot of projects and actors also outside the City government started to refer to the Food Policy. Beside this, some European project were promoted by the Municipality in the same perspective and, finally, the new City Board defined new and more specific political responsibilities and technical roles to start a more solid implementation of the priorities of the Food Policy.

#### **4. Comparative analysis**

The comparative analysis shows important similarities, as well as significative differences between the two case-studies (Table 1).

First of all, the two cities, are quite different one from the other, for what concerns the food system, even if they share the industrial past and post-industrial present and a top position in the Italian urban ranking (the scope of the influence of Milan is much higher than the Turin one, though).

One on hand, in Turin the process of deterritorialization of the food system does not seem to be complete and the traditional relationships between the city and the productive countryside surrounding it still resist, mainly due to the dozens of daily traditional farmers' markets still working. In Milan the relationship with local food is more focused on many interesting recently born projects of relocalization of food, taking advantage of the productive areas of the South Milan Agricultural Park, protecting and planning rural landscape and economy since the early 90s.

The two cities share the fact of being the location of important food events: Turin regularly hosts Terra Madre/Salone del Gusto, which is the main Slow Food event, while Milan recently organized the Expo 2015 - Feeding the Planet, that boosted the food policy discourse at national and international scale.

According to the interpretive framework based on Sonnino and Spayde (2013), the processes analyzed in the two cities, generally share the same steps, inspired to the processes of development and implementation of UFPs in the UK and in North America.

However, the observed processes have also significative dissimilarities. The first is the first impulse, that in Turin mostly came from some local authorities officials, actively engaged in promoting the participatory development of a food policy. In Milan, the process has instead been clearly started by a political impulse, coming from the mayor of the city (Giuliano Pisapia), in the context of the debate surrounding Expo 2015.

This difference lead to a clear diversity in the political legitimacy of the process, that in Turin has been supported by the local government, but it did not seem to be considered as a priority by the Mayor<sup>3</sup>.

Another significative difference between the two cities is represented by the funding system supporting the processes preliminary to the adoption of UFPs. In Milan, most part of the process have been funded by the banking foundation Fondazione Cariplo and, once the process started, it was funded also by the Municipality through an EU project, while in Turin it has a lower budget, partly coming from already existing EU projects.

Trying to summarize, in Milan the process has been more clearly directed to the objective of developing and approving an urban food policy. In Turin, instead, the process can be seen as the result of the engagement of various actors, trying to create awareness and participation around the issues of food policies, and to identify existing practices and shared priorities, without clearly pursuing the objective of concretely approving a food policy, also because of the lack of political legitimacy.

Coherently with what just described, in Milan in October 2015, the City Council approved the strategic framework (*Linee di indirizzo of the Food Policy 2015-2020*), while in Turin the outputs of the participatory processes that took place in 2014 and 2015 are still waiting to be transformed into strategic documents and/or effective decisions by local authorities or other involved actors.

| <i>General overview</i> | <b>Turin</b><br><br>Scale: different scales of actions for different processes:<br>- City of Turin (pop. 800.000)<br>- Metropolitan City of Turin (pop. 2,28 million)<br><br>Current State of advancement of UFP: in stand-by after the participatory process | <b>Milan</b><br><br>Scale: City of Milan (pop. 1,35 million)<br><br>Current State of advancement of UFP: Food Policy approved by the City Council |
|-------------------------|---|---|
| <i>Overall vision</i>   | Objective of a diffused accessibility of high-quality food  | Despite the lack of a previous overall vision, adoption of a very   |

---

<sup>3</sup> In 2016 the former Mayor (Piero Fassino) lost the municipal elections, and was substituted by Chiara Appendino, from the "Movimento Cinque Stelle". The decisions of the new Mayor about food policies represent the main challenge for the process in Turin.

|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
|  |   | comprehensive approach for the food policy.   |
| <i>Policy approach</i>                   | Adequately comprehensive (little less attention to social welfare and post-consumption) | Highly comprehensive  |
| <i>Stated need for change</i>            | Clearly stated  | Clear, but not enough explicitly and publicly declared  |
| <i>Involvement of stakeholders</i>       | More than 250 involve in three participatory processes                                  | 100 involved in the phase of assessment<br>150 in the Town Meeting<br>700 in the public consultation                            |
| <i>Evaluation and monitoring systems</i> | Project Atlas of Food   | An assessment of the urban food system was done as a first step of the process. At this moment there is not a monitoring system |
| <i>Cultural change</i>                   | Processes involving the many actors already working for a change in the food system     | The UFP approach is progressively becoming part of the public debate  |

*Table 1 - Summary of the comparative analysis of the two case-studies*

## 5. Conclusion

The analysis of the two case-studies can lead to some methodological conclusions on the chosen tools of analysis, and to more general conclusions about territorial and urban food policies in the Italian context.

Concerning the former, it would be very important to add the methodological framework adopted by this analysis with considerations about the political legitimisation of the processes, which plays a decisive role in the effective implementation of the food policy. On one hand, the leadership role of institutional actors guiding the process seems to be essential to gain adequate legitimisation of the process itself, making it an institutional, political and cultural reference for food issues in the city. On the other hand, though, already existing practices and initiatives designed to improve the food system should not be harnessed by a very rigid framework that could cause a loss of the spontaneous power of engagement and action expressed by those initiatives.

In a broad sense, the analysis of the two processes shows that the development of food policies in the Italian context should be exploited by both institutional and non-institutional actors of the food system as an opportunity to reflect on some core issues.

First, the right *scales* of the food policy. The development of food policies at the urban scale needs a definition of this scale that obviously moves beyond the municipal boundaries, toward the concept of city-region that is widely explored by territorial sciences (Rodríguez Pose, 2008), and which has been recently adopted by food studies (Blay Palmer et al., 2015).

However, in order to adopt an innovative territorial approach based on Urban Food Planning, it would be desirable to overcome the monocentric vision of a metropolitan area gravitating around a main central functional node, in an attempt to adopt a polycentric perspective, picturing a network of territorial food systems in different scales, interconnected and nesting within each other. Food planning could be a field of experimentation for an innovative conception of spatial relations between the two metropolitan areas. Totally reversing the image of two big cities at the centre of two local food systems, we could, in fact, consider two big cities at the borders of a huge urban area where various territorial systems (rural, urban, rural) juxtapose, interact and overlap. Within this area, there is a deeply historical rural region that is currently mostly occupied by agro-industrial cultivations of cereals (rice and corn) (Galli et al., 2010), but which could potentially be a future foodshed for this innovative and provocative idea of food-city-region, where relations between centre and periphery, and between urban and rural can be subverted.

Second, a more efficient food system *governance* model should direct the food system towards the common goals of the actors, while leaving a large variety of players (institutional, commercial, activists, etc.) free to pursue their own strategies and objectives.

Third, the need to identify the *goals* of the food system and the right *strategies* to achieve them through a process of territorialisation of urban food planning discourses and strategies, which should be adapted to the local context. This is specifically true in the case of Italian cities, still less affected by processes of de-territorialization of the food system, if compared to UK or North America, where Urban Food Planning mostly developed. The actions of these two pioneer cities can then represent an important starting point for a broader reflection about an Italian (or Mediterranean) way to Urban Food Policies.

## References

- Agnelli G., Calori A., Federici F., Magarini A. (eds) *Elementi per l'istituzione del "Consiglio Metropolitano del Cibo" di Milano*. EStà, Comune di Milano, Fondazione Cariplo, 2016.
- Armano E., Dondona C.A. and Ferlaino F. (edited) 2016. *Postfordismo e trasformazione urbana*, Turin: Ires Piemonte,
- Beltrame G. 2000. *Il Parco Agricolo Sud Milano*, Arienti, Milano.
- Bertoncin M., Pase A. (edited). 2006. *Il territorio non è un asino*. Milan: Franco Angeli
- Blay-Palmer, A. 2009. The Canadian Pioneer: The Genesis of Urban Food Policy in Toronto. *International Planning Studies*. 14(4): 401-416
- Bottiglieri M., Pettenati G. and Toldo A. 2016. *Toward the Turin Food Policy. Good Practices and vision*. Milano: Franco Angeli



- Borasio M., Prusicki M. 2014, Milano metropoli rurale. Un progetto di valorizzazione delle acque per la neo-ruralizzazione del sistema territoriale milanese, in: Scienze del Territorio, FUP, n.2.
- Calafati, A. 2014. *Città e aree metropolitane in Italia (Cities and Metropolitan Areas in Italy)*. GSSI Urban Studies Working Paper, 1, L'Aquila: Gran Sasso Science Institute
- Calori A. 2009, *Innovazione sociale e economie territoriali nel Parco Agricolo Sud Milano*, in Magnaghi A., Fanfani D. (by) "Patto Città' Campagna. Un Progetto di Bioregione Urbana per la Toscana Centrale", Florence University Press, Firenze.
- Calori A., Magarini A. 2014. *The role of informal food networks. Notes from the experience of Milan toward food policy councils*, FAO.
- Calori A.; Magarini A. 2015. *Food and the Cities. Food Policies for Sustainable cities*. Milan: Edizioni Ambiente, Milano, 2015.
- Calori A. 2015, *Sustaining Grassroots Initiatives and Institutional Roles in the Urban Food Policy of Milan*. Urban Agriculture magazine n.28, RUAF Foundation, May 2015.
- Calori A. 2015. *Do an Urban Food Policy needs new institutions? Lesson learned from the Food Policy of Milan toward Food Policy Councils*. Proceedings of the 7th International Aesop Sustainable Food Planning Conference, Torino, 7-9 October 2015, Giuseppe Cinà and Egidio Dansero (eds), Torino
- Carey J. 2011. *Who Feeds Bristol?*. Bristol: NHS Bristol
- Carey J. 2013. Urban and Community Food Strategies. The Case of Bristol. *International Planning Studies*. 8(1): 111-128
- Comune di Milano 2015, "linee di indirizzo della Food Policy di Milano 2015-2020", Milano.
- Corrado A. 2013, I produttori critici del Distretto di economia solidale rurale parco agricolo sud Milano, *Agriregionieuropa* anno 9 n°32, Marzo.
- Dansero E. and Puttilli M. 2012. From Ford to the Olympics. *Revue de Géographie Alpine*, 100-4. <http://rga.revues.org/1834?lang=it> (Accessed November 7th 2016)
- Dansero, E., Pettenati G., Toldo A. 2015. The Atlas of Food. A space of representation, a place for policies, a methodology of territorial analysis, Meeting Urban Needs Project, FAO [http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/ags/docs/MUFN/CALL\\_FILES\\_EXPERT\\_2015/CFP1-05\\_Full\\_Paper.pdf](http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/ags/docs/MUFN/CALL_FILES_EXPERT_2015/CFP1-05_Full_Paper.pdf)
- Dansero E., Di Bella E., Peano C. and Toldo A. 2016. Nutrire Torino Metropolitana: verso una politica alimentare locale. *Agriregionieuropa*, 44, <http://agrireregionieuropa.univpm.it/it/content/article/31/44/nutrire-torino-metropolitana-verso-una-politica-alimentare-locale> (Accessed November 7th 2016)
- Di Bella E. 2016. Food policies at the metropolitan scale. In *Toward the Turin Food Policy. Good Practices and vision*. eds Bottiglieri M., Pettenati G., Toldo A., 23-26. Milan: Franco Angeli
- Di Iacovo F., Brunori G. and Innocenti S. 2013. Le strategie urbane: il piano del cibo, *Agriregionieuropa*, 32, <http://agrireregionieuropa.univpm.it/it/content/article/31/32/le-strategie-urbane-il-piano-del-cibo> (Accessed November 7th 2016)
- Ferraresi G, Rossi A. 1993. *Il parco come cura e coltura del territorio. Una ricerca sull'ipotesi del parco agricolo*, Grafo, Milano,
- Hild C. 2009. *The economy of local food in Vancouver*. Vancouver: Vancouver Economic Development Commission

Kearns, A. and Forrest R. 2000. Social cohesion and multilevel urban governance. *Urban studies*. 37(5): 995-1017.

Milan Food Policy 2015, (eds) Andrea Calori. 10 questioni della Food Policy di Milano. EStà, Comune di Milano, Fondazione Cariplo.

Moragues A., Morgan K., Moschitz H., Neimane I., Nilsson, H., Pinto M., Rohrer H., Ruiz R., Thuswald M., Tisenkopfs T. and Halliday J. 2013 "Urban Food Strategies: the rough guide to sustainable food systems". Document developed in the framework of the FP7 project FOODLINKS.

Moragues-Faus, A. and Morgan, K. 2015. Reframing the foodscape: the emergent world of urban food policy. *Environment and Planning A*. 47(7): 1558-1573.

Morgan, K. 2009. Feeding the City: The Challenge of Urban Food Planning. *International Planning Studies* 14 (4): 341–348

Morgan K. 2013. The rise of urban food planning. *International Planning Studies* 18(1): 1-4

Morgan, K. 2015. Nourishing the city: The rise of the urban food question in the Global North. *Urban Studies*, 52(8): 1379-1394

Morgan K., Sonnino R. 2010. The Urban Foodscape: World Cities and the New Food Equation. *Cambridge journal of Regions Economy and Society*. 3(2): 209-224

Mount, P. 2012. Growing local food: scale and local food systems governance. *Agriculture and Human Values*. 29: 107-121.

Pothukuchi K. e Kaufman J. 1999. Placing the Food System on the Urban Agenda: The Role of Municipal Institutions in Food Systems Planning. *Agriculture and Human Values*. 16: 213-224

Pothukuchi, K., Kaufman, J. 2000. The Food System: A Stranger to the Planning Field. *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 66 (2): 113–123

Rhodes R. 1997. *Understanding Governance: Policy networks, Governance, Reflexivity and Accountability* Buckingham: Open University Press

Sonnino, R. and Spayde, J. 2014. The New Frontier? Urban strategies for food security and sustainability. In *Sustainable Food Systems: Building a New Paradigm*. eds. T. Marsden and A. Morley. 186-205. London: Earthscan

Tavolo per la Rete italiana di economia solidale 2010, "Il capitale delle relazioni, Altreconomia, Milano.

Torino Strategica,. 2015. *Torino Metropoli 2025*, Torino: Torino Strategica, Turin.

[http://www.torinostrategica.it/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Torino\\_Metropoli\\_2025\\_web2.pdf](http://www.torinostrategica.it/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Torino_Metropoli_2025_web2.pdf).

Vanolo, A. 2015. The image of the creative city, eight years later: Turin, urban branding and the economic crisis taboo. *Cities*, 46, 1-7.